Ministry of Health
Vanuatu Government

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Vanuatu Situation Report #147 Issued 01 June-Covering 31 May-01 June 2022

Yellow highlights indicate where information has changed relative to the previous SitRep.

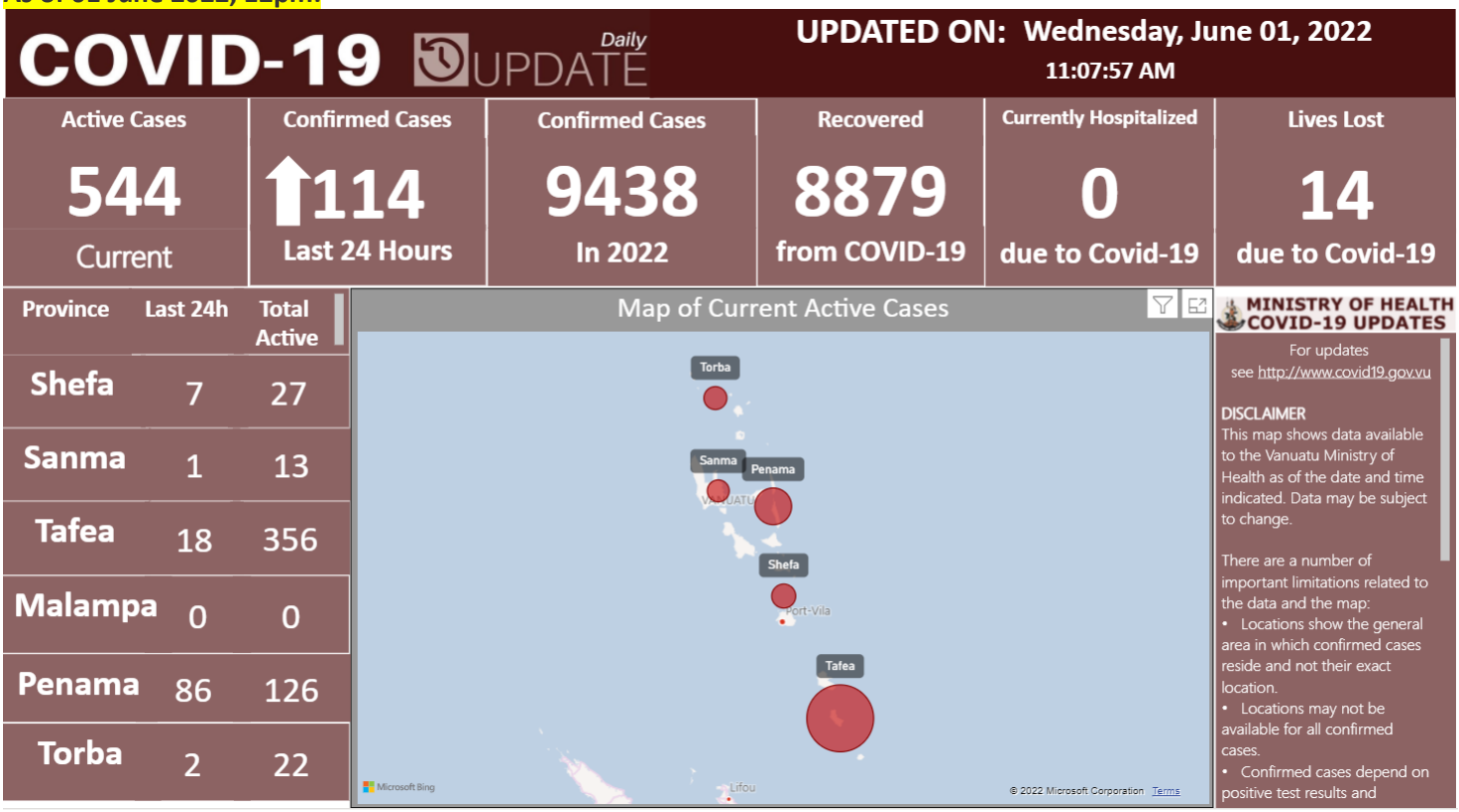
SUMMARY AND DISEASE BURDEN

- On 04 March 2022, an active COVID-19 case was confirmed at Vila Central Hospital who had no travel history, indicating transmission at community level.
- As of 17 May the following recommendations have been made:
  - Vanua Lava and Gaua now move to Recovery Level 1. Torres group (Hiu, Toga, Loh, Tequa, Metoma) to move to Recovery Level 1 and the rest of the Banks group (Merelava, Merig, Mota, Ureparapara) to remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 1. Motalava now moves to Alert Level 3
  - Tanna and Erromango – COVID 19 Alert Level 3 and Aneityum, Aniwa and Futuna to remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 1.
  - Pentecost to move to Recovery Level 1 and Ambae and Maewo to remain at COVID 19 Alert Level 1.
  - All the islands of Malampa province remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 1.
  - Efate and its offshore islands to remain at Recovery Level 1 and Epi, Tongoa and Shepherds group (Makira, Buninga, Mataso, Emae, Tongariki) to remain at COVID 19 Alert Level 1.
  - Santo and its offshore islands and Malo Island to move to Recovery Level 1
- **A total of 9438 confirmed cases have been reported since the beginning of 2022.**
- **114 new confirmed cases have been reported in the last 24 hours, 18 in TAFEA Province (Tanna), 7 in SHEFA (Efate), 2 in TORBA Province (Vanua Lava), 86 in PENAMA Province (Ambae and Pentecost) and 1 in SANMA Province (Santo). The accuracy of the data is based on the accuracy of the case notification.** *****Discrepancies with previous reports result from change in the way data are reported*****
- **After having reported its first case border on 09 May, Ambae island reported its first community cases. 32 active cases reported since 29 May. Case investigation and contact tracing ongoing.**
- **No hospitalization is reported during this period.**

The best way to protect yourself, your family and your community is to follow the instructions provided by health authorities, follow public health prevention measures and to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19. WHO-recommended vaccines like AstraZeneca, Sinopharm and Johnson and Johnson are safe and effective.

Yellow highlights indicate where information has changed relative to the previous SitRep.

As of 01 June 2022, 12pm:



*Discrepancies with previous reports may result from lags in data entry and reporting at a national and provincial level. Increase and decrease of cases on a daily basis is dependent on the number of tests conducted and might not reflect the actual number of cases. *Include cases detected at the border and in the community, #Require medical care, ^Includes PCR and rapid antigen tests; this only includes tests that have been reported to the surveillance unit*

+Test positivity is the average positivity over the last 7 days; this is done to adjust for daily fluctuations

DEFINITIONS: A recovered case is someone who meets the criteria for no longer requiring isolation. A deceased case is a death that is confirmed by medical officers to be due to COVID-19 infection. Each death requires additional clinical review and verification.

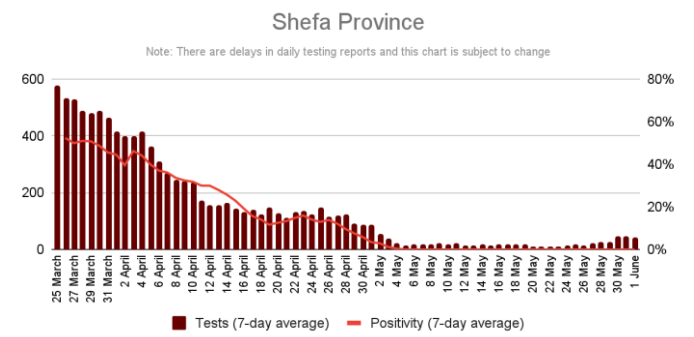
Current epidemiological situation

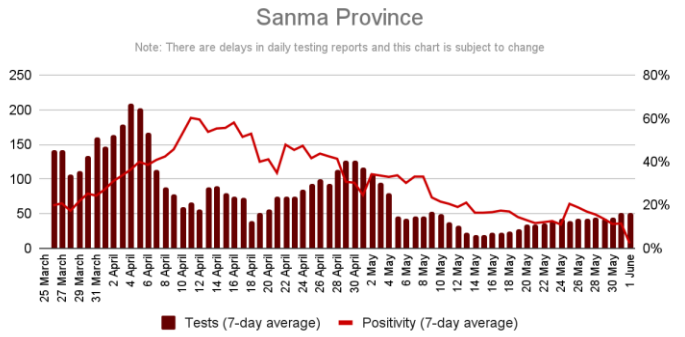
The number of new cases on a daily basis differs in each affected province, in Shefa province new cases has decreased since 31 March, Sanma province number of new cases has decreased since 30 April, Penama Province new cases has decreased since 18 May, and new cases are stable in Torba and Tafea Province (see Figure 1 & 2). The cases captured through surveillance do not represent all cases in the community; there are many more cases that have not been detected as they are asymptomatic or the person has not been tested. Work is underway to quantify the level of under detection in Shefa and Sanma provinces.

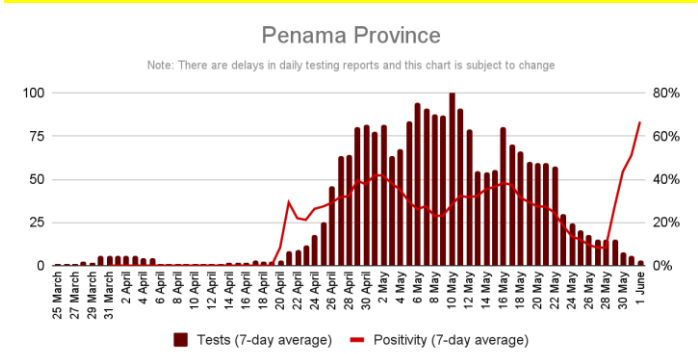
The number of hospitalisations for people due to COVID-19 and the number of critically ill cases is currently stable however the number of COVID-19 cases that are critically ill is expected to increase over the coming week due to a lag between the outbreak starting and severe cases emerging. Additional work is underway to ensure that all information on hospitalised cases is complete. Anyone that experiences any of the danger signs are urged to seek medical care immediately. Danger signs are symptoms such as difficulty breathing, loss of speech or mobility, confusion or chest pain.

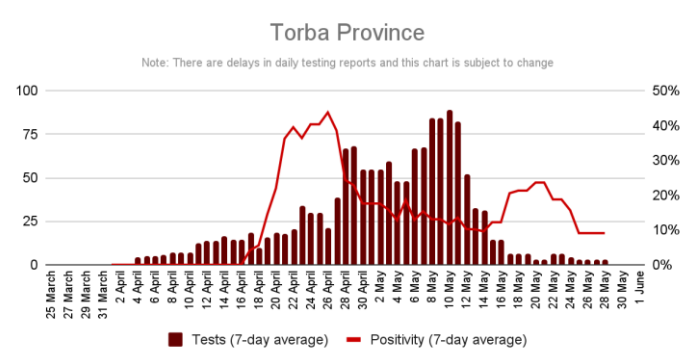
The number of tests conducted each day has decreased in Shefa, Sanma and Torba provinces and stable in Penama and Tafea Province (Figure 3). The test positivity (the percentage of all tests reported that were reported to be positive) has decreased in Shefa, Sanma and Penama Province and Increase in Torba and Tafea Province (Figure 3) . There is evidence that Shefa and Sanma province have passed the peak of infections.

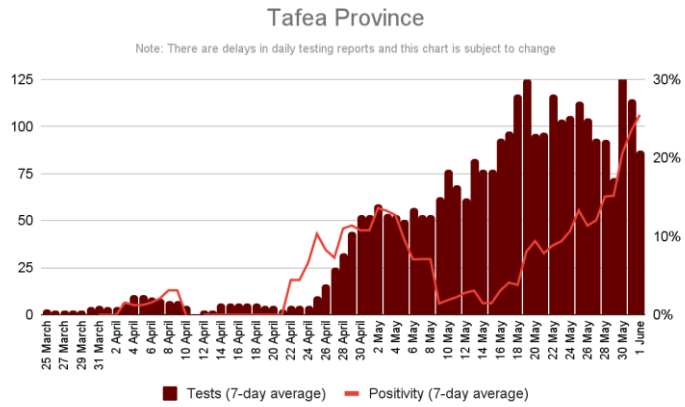
Figure 1: Testing and positivity in affected provinces, 2022











PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL MEASURES:

The following measures have been put in place in light of the outbreak:

1. A curfew is applied in Tanna and Erromango from 6 pm to 6 am until 31st May. The curfew acts as a 'stay-at-home' order and is a key action during the pandemic with the goal of reducing COVID-19 transmission by reducing non-essential interactions between people from different households.

2. The curfew does not apply to:
a. persons requiring emergency health services and persons assisting them to get emergency health services;
b. essential services as defined as defined in the order and approved by the Minister;
c. persons engaged in activities under the national clusters that are being activated by the National Disaster Management Office on Efate and its offshore islands; and
d. persons or children requiring getting vaccination for COVID-19 and other vaccines.

As of 17 May the following recommendations have been made:

- Vanua Lava and Gaua to remain at Recovery Level 2. Torres group (Hiu, Toga, Loh, Tequa, Metoma) to move to Recovery Level 1 and the rest of the Banks group (Merelava, Merig, Motalava, Mota, Ureparapara) to remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 1.
- Tanna and Erromango – COVID 19 Alert Level 3 and Aneityum, Aniwa and Futuna to remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 1.

- Pentecost to move to Recovery Level 2 and Ambae and Maewo to remain at COVID 19 Alert Level 1.
- All the islands of Malampa province remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 1.
- Efate and its offshore islands to remain at Recovery Level 1 and Epi, Tongoa and Shepherds group (Makira, Buninga, Mataso, Emae, Tongariki) to remain at COVID 19 Alert Level 1.
- Santo and its offshore islands and Malo Island to move to Recovery Level 1

OPERATIONS:

The National Health Emergency Operations Centre is activated and is meeting twice daily to manage and coordinate the response operations.

- **Surveillance and testing:** one hundred fourteen (114) new active cases have been reported in the previous 24 hours, 18 in Tafea Province (Tanna), 7 in Shefa Province (Efate), 2 in TORBA Province (Vanua Lava), 1 in Sanma Province (Santo) and 86 in PENAMA province (Pentecost and Ambae).
- **Hospital management:** 0 hospitalization reported during this reporting period. Total hospitalized to date is 70 cases due to covid-19 infection, 64 in Shefa Province, 5 in Sanma Province and 1 in Penama Province.
- **Deaths due to COVID-19**: 0 new deaths reported during this reporting period. Total deaths to date is 14, including 11 deaths in Shefa Province and 3 in Sanma province with 6 Fully Vaccinated, 4 not fully vaccinated and 4 unvaccinated and 12 with underlying health conditions and two with no underlying health condition.
- **Provincial update:**
  PCR, Rapid Antigen Tests, swabs and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) have been sent to the provinces to allow testing of suspected cases and of contacts as required. This will allow proper monitoring of the situation in all 6 provinces of Vanuatu. Needs assessment is being conducted to identify any support required.
  - Shefa province: 7 new cases reported in the last 24 hours, in Efate. Investigation and contact tracing ongoing.
  - Sanma province: 1 new case reported in Santo in the last 24 hours.
  - Torba province: 2 new cases reported in the last 24 hours, in Vanua Lava nvestigation and contact tracing ongoing.
  - Penama province: 86 new cases reported in the last 24 hours, in Ambae and Pentepcst.
  - Tafea province: 18 new cases reported in Tanna in the last 24 hours. Investigation and contact tracing ongoing.
  - Malampa province: Reports of travel of contacts of cases from Port Vila. Investigation ongoing.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Everyone is urged to refer only to official information sources and to avoid spreading misinformation and rumours. Further information and updates are made available by the Ministry of Health on the dedicated COVID-19 website at www.covid19.gov.vu, the Health Promotion Unit Facebook page, and by calling the Health Information Hotline on 119.

Approved by: Dr Samuel Posikai Tapo,
National Health Incident Management Controller, Ministry of Health
Director of Corporate Services, Policy and Planning, Ministry of Health

Approved at: 01 June 2022, 12:00pm

** The frequency of Ministry of Health COVID-19 Situation Reports will depend on the evolving situation.*